

BIDDER QUESTIONS & DVHA RESPONSES

General Information:

The Department of Vermont Health Access (hereinafter called DVHA) is seeking to establish service agreements with one (or more) companies that can provide planning services related to Consultant Support for the Health Information Exchange/Health Information Technology Work Group under the Vermont Health Care Innovation Project.

Estimated Contract Term: January 2, 2015 – December 31, 2015

Bidder's Phone Conference information:

Wednesday, December 3, 2014, 9-11 am (to be held at the discretion of the bid review team and scheduled on an individual basis).

Responses to Questions Received during Bidder's Question period ending November 3, 2014 at 2:00 pm and follow up questions.

Question: Can DVHA provide all the necessary forms in MS Word format to facilitate responding to the solicitation?

Answer: Please see supplemental attachments for Schedule A and the Summary of Funds form.

Question: What are the activities related to "contract management support" and where are they defined?

RFP Section Reference: Section 1.3 Page 35

Answer: Contract management support refers to assisting DVHA in managing contractors associated with the Vermont Health Care Innovation Project. Provide contract management support for the HIE/HIT work group's major funding initiatives including, but not limited to: ACTT project, ACO Project, telemedicine, and Stone Environmental. Activities might include:

- a. Develop meeting schedules and agendas for sub group meetings related to the above projects;
- b. Facilitate meetings;
- c. Provide project management services on the initiatives as required;
- d. Provide progress reports on the initiatives to the HIE team and Workgroup on a regular basis;
- e. Reports should include progress related to deliverable timetables, problems encountered, proposed amendments to the SOW, expenses incurred relative to budget.

BIDDER QUESTIONS & DVHA RESPONSES

Question: Should the phrase beginning “Assist the work group staff...” be bulleted as the items above are bulleted?

RFP Section Reference: Section 1.1 Page 36

Answer: No.

Question: What type of “information” is the DVHA expecting for each of the following Sections:

- Responsibilities of Contractor
- Role of DVHA
- Contract Administration
- Record keeping
- Reporting (as applicable)
- Hourly rate specifications
- Work Plan in the form of a GANTT Chart (if applicable)

RFP Section Reference: Section 1.1 Page 36

Answer: For each section above, bidders should describe their interpretation of their role under this project. For example- under “Role of DVHA” the bidder should describe their expectations for collaborating with DVHA, including any information they may require from DVHA to perform the work.

Question: A bulleted item beginning “suggested or required number...” seems to be out of place. If this is a valid question, where should the information requested be supplied to DVHA in our proposal packet?

RFP Section Reference: Section 2.3 Page 37

Answer: This is not applicable for this RFP.

Question: Please clarify the DVHA’s guidelines for answering the “Delivery Offered _____”, “Quotation valid for ____ Days ____” and “Terms of Sale” questions on this page and if they are relevant in this instance.

RFP Section Reference: Vermont Tax Certification and Insurance Certificate, Page 39

Answer: These are valid.

Question: What are the beginning and ending dates that should be inserted in Section 6?

RFP Section Reference: Certificates and Assurances, Page 40

BIDDER QUESTIONS & DVHA RESPONSES

Answer: The dates should be the estimated contract start and end date December 1, 2014 – November 30, 2015.

Question: Is this per individual proposed or per category of job title being proposed?

RFP Section Reference: Rate Sheet, Page 41

Answer: Whichever the bidder prefers.

Question:

- a. In prior submissions of response to a DVHA RFP, signed letters were not required. Are they required in this instance? Will the winning respondent be permitted to engage a subcontractor after an award has been made if that subcontractor was not identified in the respondent's initial response?
- b. In this type of project, the ongoing working group efforts often highlight need for additional assistance for sub or mini-projects in areas such as business, analysis, data analysis, solution architecture, etc., that is obviously not known at this time. Does the State require that all potential sub-contractors are listed at this time, or is there a process for adding subject matter experts as needed throughout the project as these needs become known?

RFP Section Reference: Subcontractor letter, Page 43

Answer: All subcontractors are subject to approval by the State's authorized representative(s). If a subcontractor is identified after the award is made, the Contractor will need to submit a formal request which will need to be approved before work can begin.

Question:

- a. We are a privately owned company that does not typically release our financial information. Does DVHA expect respondents to list ALL income received from ALL sources to date in their current fiscal year? If not, what income should be listed?
- b. "Summary of Funds" asks for funds received during the bidder's current fiscal year. Should this form be completed for the firm as a whole (ex: entire consulting firm), or as the department (ex: Health practice area) completing the required work?
- c. What type of specific information is required?

RFP Section Reference: Summary Funds, Page 44

Answer: The summary of funds form is meant to be inclusive of all federal or State grants and contracts awarded to the entire bidding organization. It is beneficial to review team to have this

BIDDER QUESTIONS & DVHA RESPONSES

information up front as we need to understand what other federal and/or state funding the bidder is receiving (if any) for reporting purposes.

(a) Source of Funds (identify in this section as federal or state funding)

(b) Contract/grant total award (identify the total amount of the funding received by federal or state grants)

Question: Schedule C Allocation of Expenses – what specifically are you looking for here?

RFP Section Reference: Schedule C, Page 49

Answer: Please describe how the administrative costs were calculated in Schedule A.

Question: Schedule D Repeated Party Disclosure – What information are you looking for?

RFP Section Reference: Schedule D, Page 49

Answer: Bidders should provide any information they are willing to share about their other agreements or partners. If bidders think they may have a conflict of interest, they should disclose it here.

Question: Please describe the expectation of the frequency that the vendor be expected to be onsite (ie, daily, periodically for meetings, etc).

Answer: We would expect the vendor to be onsite at least two times per month.

Question: Will office space be provided for the vendor staff?

Answer: No.

Question: Is there a current vendor filling this role? If so, can we have the name of the existing vendor?

Answer: No.

Question: Are there any minimum staff qualifications sought? PMP, Prior HIE research experience, specific experience in Vermont?

Answer: Research related to the Charter and Work Plan of the HIE/HIT Work Group. Assist the work group staff in carrying out the work plan approved by the work group doing any or all of the following:

- a. Prepare agendas for team meetings and workgroup meetings;

BIDDER QUESTIONS & DVHA RESPONSES

- b. Ensure that records of all meetings are maintained and accessible to the team and work group;
- c. Provide research on topics that are under consideration by the workgroup as preparation for informed discussions.

Question: Any estimate on how many FTEs are needed for this project?

Answer: We do not have an estimate of FTEs at this time, but estimate 20-80 hours per month total.

Question: Will the focus of this project be to provide support for the HIE Workgroup only? Or is the expectation that they would also provide support to the Care Models & Care Management workgroup, Disability & Long Term Services & Supports, Health Care Workforce, HIE, Payment Models, Population Health, Quality & Performance Measures Workgroup?

Answer: Yes, the focus is for the HIE/HIT Work Group.

Question: From the minutes posted online from the 9/24/14 meeting of the work group, Centerboard, LLC was selected to update the state's HIT Plan. Will the consultant selected work closely with Centerboard in this endeavor?

Answer: We would expect a modest amount of interaction with the HIT Plan consultant in that we expect the VHCIP HIE Work Group to have several points of contact with the process to develop the HIT Plan.

Question: Due to the short turnaround from the time answers are received to the time that proposal are due, can the deadline be extended at least 1 week?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Could DVHA please identify the Professional Liability minimum coverage amount?

RFP Section Reference: Section 7, Page 16

Answer: This is provided in the Standard State Terms and Conditions, Attachment C found here: <http://bgs.vermont.gov/purchasing/forms>.

Question: Is any travel within the state expected by vendor staff?

Answer: Yes.

BIDDER QUESTIONS & DVHA RESPONSES

Question: Is it possible to obtain the RFP in Word format?

Answer: Please see supplemental attachments.

Question: Is this a staff-augmentation requirement, for personnel to work as consultants with the HIE/HIT Work Group?

Answer: Yes.

Question: How many personnel are required? Is that for the vendor to decide, or to be specified by the State?

Answer: The vendor should propose estimated staff, but the State will specify during contract negotiations.

Question: Can any of the consultants work from an offshore location (outside the US), to optimize cost?

Answer: No.

Question: Research – Please specify the nature of the research to be conducted.

Answer: Research related to the Charter and Work Plan of the HIE/HIT Work Group.

Question: Chapter 3, Section 1.3 - Can you please elaborate on third bullet?

Answer: As required, the contractor will develop documents for use by the work group. These will relate to specific agenda items and can include PowerPoint presentations, timelines, and other research materials to support policy and funding proposals. Assist the work group staff in carrying out the work plan approved by the work group doing any or all of the following:

- a. Prepare agendas for team meetings and workgroup meetings;
- b. Ensure that records of all meetings are maintained and accessible to the team and work group;
- c. As noted above in #1, provide research on topics that are under consideration by the workgroup as preparation for informed discussions.

Question: Can you please provide documents to support decisions made by the work group?

Answer: These are available on the VHCIP website.

BIDDER QUESTIONS & DVHA RESPONSES

Question: Is the plan of the Vermont Department of Health Access to regulate Electronic Health Records (E.H.R.'s) in Vermont?

Answer: The work group's Charter and Work Plan include specific tasks and goals for the work group. This includes making recommendations related to the EHR infrastructure in Vermont.

Question: Is the plan of the Vermont Department of Health Access to fund E.H.R.s for community health providers?

Answer: The work group's Charter and Work Plan include specific tasks and goals for the work group. This includes making recommendations related to the EHR infrastructure in Vermont.

Question: Is the plan of the Vermont Department of Health Access to access patient health metrics through the E.H.R. system?

RFP Section Reference: Section 1.2, Page 35

Answer: The work group's Charter and Work Plan include specific tasks and goals for the work group. This includes making recommendations related to the EHR infrastructure in Vermont.

Question: The request for proposal mentions the coordination and possible expended measurement of consumer experience measures. What consumer experience measures are being used presently?

RFP Section Reference: Section 1.2, Page 35

Answer: There are numerous measures in use. These include a patient experience survey fielded annually.

Question: How many hours of support are expected per month?

Answer: This depends upon the activity of the work group in any given month.

Question: What specific types of technology expertise are needed? *Please clarify whether the consultant(s) need to have Functional/Technical competencies, or both.*

Answer: The HIE/HIT Work Group is engaged in evaluating various health data related proposals. Successful vendors will have knowledge of Vermont's Health Information Exchange, an understanding of the health information landscape and technical knowledge about health data integration. Other types of expertise are described in the work group Charter and Work Plan. Both functional and technical competencies are preferable.

BIDDER QUESTIONS & DVHA RESPONSES

Question: Are there specific domain areas that you are looking to supplement the knowledge of the work group?

Answer: The HIE/HIT Work Group is engaged in evaluating various health data related proposals. Successful vendors will have knowledge of Vermont's Health Information Exchange, an understanding of the health information landscape and technical knowledge about health data integration. Other types of expertise are described in the work group Charter and Work Plan.

Question: What activities and what role do you envision for technology SMEs on this project?

Answer: All staff engaged in work under this RFP will be to provide support to the work group in making funding and policy recommendations. The HIE/HIT Work Group is engaged in evaluating various health data related proposals. Successful vendors will have knowledge of Vermont's Health Information Exchange, an understanding of the health information landscape and technical knowledge about health data integration. Other types of expertise are described in the work group Charter and Work Plan.

Question: Will there be meeting facilitation needed in between the regular monthly meetings? If so, approximately how many meetings per month?

Answer: Yes. This depends upon the work group's tasks and averages two meetings/month.

Question: If there are any sub-work groups, how many are there?

Answer: There are no sub-work groups.

Question: What are the expected reporting activities of the Consultant?

Answer: An example of the contract reporting structure can be found in this contract:
<http://dvha.vermont.gov/administration/1james-hester-jr.-contract-signed.pdf>.

Question: How much coordination and interaction will be expected of the Consultant with the VHCIP's Core Team, Steering Committee, and other Work Groups?

Answer: The contractor will have some interaction with each of these groups.

Question: What is the project's anticipated budget?

Answer: The State has not specified a budget for this project at this time.

BIDDER QUESTIONS & DVHA RESPONSES

Question: Do you have an estimate for the number of resources, or time/effort required over the duration of this project?

Answer: It is estimated that contractors be available 20-80 hours per month depending on activities.

Question: Does prior or current consulting engagements with the agencies/organizations responsible for the programs listed in Section 1.3 “Scope of work and Contractor Responsibilities” constitute a conflict of interest, in the State’s opinion (for example VITL, DVHA, ACO, ACTT etc.)?

Answer: Conflicts are determined on a case by case basis and prior or current consulting engagements do not necessary preclude a vendor from successfully being awarded a contract resulting from this RFP.

Question: Is there a fixed budget allocation for this project?

Answer: No.

Question: Please explain the connection between Chapter 3, Section 1.1 (page 36) and the “Criteria for Scoring” on page 12. Specifically, please explain what Vermont is looking for regarding the requirements stated in the bullets. Chapter 3, Section 1.1 (page 36) indicates that the Technical proposal requires information related to four bullets:

- Provide research to support decisions made by the work group;
- Provide SME in the area of HIE, HIT and Health data;
- Provide documents to support decisions made by the work group;
- Provide contract management support for the HIE/HIT workgroup’s major funding initiatives including but not limited to: Advancing Care through Technology (ACTT) Project; Population Health ACO project and Telemedicine:
Assist the work group staff in carrying out the work plan approved by the work group.

Page 12 – The criteria for scoring the technical proposal/program specifications in Chapter 1, Section 2.1 “Responsiveness to Specifications” indicates that the proposal will be scored on the following:

- Provide a description of how bidder will respond to program goals, which research based approaches will be employed and how the bidder will evaluate its performance and quality.
- Describe how the bidder will ensure that all included services will be readily accessible and provided in a timely manner.
- Describe how bidder will work with state staff, relevant VHCIP work groups and other community stakeholders.
- Describe how this program is supported by bidder’s mission and other policies of the bidder.

BIDDER QUESTIONS & DVHA RESPONSES

Can you tell potential bidders more information regarding how to understand how the requirements from page 12 are managed on page 36?

RFP Section Reference: Chapter 1, Section 2.1 and Chapter 3, Section 1.1 Pages 12 and 36

Answer: Bids will be judged based on the scoring criteria and the vendor's responsiveness to the technical requirements.

Question: Page 36 of the RFP ("1.1 Technical Proposal") lists four bullet points to be contained within the bidder's technical proposal. Page 36 continues with a list of seven bullet points of information. Does the DVHA want the bidder to write to these requirements within the structure outlined on page 12 ("2 Criteria for Scoring" under "A Responsiveness to Specifications") or does the DVHA want the bidder to write to each of these requirements separately?

RFP Section Reference: chapter 3, Section 1.1, Page 36

Answer: The bidder can respond to this in any way that works best.

Question: Page 36 of the RFP ("1.1 Technical Proposal") asks for the bidder to "provide subject matter expertise in the area of Health Information Exchange, Health Information Technology and Health data..." Does the DVHA want the bidder to answer this at a high-level (ex: experience of the firm) or to provide personnel and resumes of key staff to be bid on the project? If resumes are desired, can these be included in an Appendix?

RFP Section Reference: Chapter 3, Section 1.1, Page 36

Answer: The bidder can provide the information in either format and references can be provided in the Appendix.

Question: Are there any prohibitions against vendors performing the services outlined in this RFP also performing other services related to Vermont's SIM grant?

Answer: No.

Question: Does DVHA have an estimate as to the number of vendor staff that will be needed to perform this scope of work?

Answer: Estimated resource need is 20-80 hours per month.